

NIGERIA'S AGRICULTURE AND THE WORLD FOOD SUMMIT 1996

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria has food security as one of its agricultural policy thrust and she is a participating member of the World Food Summit (WFS). The WFS has set 2015 as the target year for reducing by 50% the number of the hungry as at 1990 – 1992 baseline figures. Against this background, this paper, using the methodology of Aggregate Measure of Support (AMS) and Nutritional Target, and taking into consideration food supplies from domestic sources alone, assessed Nigeria's contribution towards the WFS goal, in particular the domestic food security situation for period 1992 to 2005. Some of the findings were that: Nigeria has recorded remarkable improvement in her food security situation; the incidence of the hungry has declined from 13.02% in 1990 – 1992 base year to 2.41% in 2005; the number of the malnourished declined from 11.51 million persons in 1990 – 1992 to 3.16 million persons in 2005; although the absolute annual budgetary provisions for agriculture were on the increase, its percentage share of the FGN total annual budget fluctuated widely with a general negative trend. The paper recommended amongst others, the shaping up of existing institutions in agriculture with a view to reducing superfluous federal and state offices and maintaining only functional state offices; taking practical steps to forestall the effects of HIV/AIDS and other pandemics by way of promoting re-investment and recapitalizing smallholder farmers who, generally speaking, are the worst hit and, enhancing policy implementation ability and sustainability of relevant government agencies.

KEYWORDS: Food security, World Food Summit, Nutritional Target, HIV/AIDS, Government agencies

INTRODUCTION

The World Food Summit (WFS) held its first meeting in Rome in November 1996 and a second one in 2006. The initial meeting was consequent upon the observed deteriorating downward trend in global food production and consumption problem at the World Food Conference in 1974 (USDA, 2005) and the subsequent solemn proclamation that "every man, woman and child has the inalienable right to be free from hunger and malnutrition in order to develop their physical and mental facilities". It was a meeting of World leaders at the highest level- men and women who have the capacity to direct the resources of their respective nation towards desired goals. The failure of past conferences on food has been traced to lack of commitment on the part of participating nations. For this reason, the Summit has as its primary objective the elicitation of the commitment of World leaders to implement policies, strategies and plan that were to be formulated at the meeting. The Summit never intended to make members to pledge fund or create a new financial mechanism, institution or bureaucracy to facilitate the achievement of goals. This approach may have been buttressed by the concept of Food Sovereignty of nation which was adopted at the WFS. The Food Sovereignty of nation was to the effect that nations and governments have the right to define their own agricultural and food policies whilst avoiding dumping products in any country (SWAC, 2007). The 186 nations that participated at this Summit agreed to reduce the number of the malnourished as at 1990 – 1992 base years by 50% in 2015. This commitment of these 186 countries at the WFS is today of great interest to the world. USDA (2005) reported that there was a growing concern about the slow progress towards meeting the goal. The world is half way to the target year of 2015 by which time the number of the undernourished globally was expected to have been reduced to half of the 1990 – 1992 baseline figure. Nigeria is a participating nation at the WFS.

Objectives of the Study

The overall question that this paper addressed at this mid-term review of the Rome Declaration on World Food Security was to what extent has Nigeria achieved the target of halving the number of the undernourished? More specifically the paper aims:

To assess Nigeria's effort towards achieving the 2015 target year for reducing the number of the undernourished by 50% and, to determine the trend in the number and prevalence of the undernourished in Nigeria since 1990 – 1992 with a view to ascertaining Nigeria's effort towards target.

In formulating these objectives, this paper recognizes the fact that the WFS goal was not at country level or regional level but at global level. The objectives were only intended to determine Nigeria's own contribution towards achieving the WFS goal. This approach was informed by the belief that in the final analysis, how well the Summit achieved the set target in 2015 will depend on the sum performance of the individual participating nations by way of food production and supply from domestic sources and not necessarily by the ability to import and or attract food aids. Hence this self-review was in part intended to, in the words of Jacques Diouf the then Director-General of FAO, enable us scale up proven models and strategies while at the same time sharpening the focus on problem areas (FAO, 2006).

Literature Review

Policies and Objectives of the WFS

The result of the first WFS is today popularly referred to as Rome Declaration on World Food Security. At this meeting, it was the consensus that "Food security exists when all people at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life". Towards the achievement of the essence of this definition, the "world" during the summit pledge itself to 7 commitments with 27 objectives. The 7 commitments were as follows:

To ensure an enabling political, social and economic environment designed to create the best conditions for the eradication of poverty and for durable peace, base on equal participation of women and men, which is most conducive achieving sustainable food security for all.

To implement policies aimed at eradicating poverty and inequality and improving physical and economic access by all, at all times, to sufficient, nutritionally adequate and safe food and its effective utilization.

To pursue participatory and sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and rural development policies and practices in high and low areas, which are essential to adequate and reliable food supplies at the household, national, regional and global levels, and combat pests, drought and deforestation, considering the multifunctional character of agriculture

To strive to ensure that food, agricultural trade and overall trade policies are conducive to fostering food security for all through a fair and market oriented world trade system.

To endeavour to prevent and be prepared for natural disaster and man-made emergencies and to meet transitory and emergency food requirements in ways that encourages recovery, rehabilitation, development and a capacity to supply future needs.

To promote optimal allocation and use of public and private investments to foster human resources, sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries and forestry systems, and rural development, in high and low areas.

To implement, monitor, and follow-up this plan of Action at all levels in cooperation with the international community.

Strategies/Modality of Operation

The WFS was only expected to lead to the adoption of appropriate policies, strategies and action plan and to elicit the commitment of participating nations to the operation of the plan. The individual participating nations were however free to consider independently how and what it might wish to contribute to the implementation of these policies, strategies and plan of action adopted. Apparently, shallow and non-binding as this strategy may seem, trust was at the bottom and the integrity of the individual participating nations was at stake. The onus was therefore on

them to prove their faithfulness to the global goal. What is left for the body therefore is the monitoring and follow-up of Action plan at all levels in cooperation with international community and to conduct periodic review of efforts and strategies to ensure the logical success of the Summit. One of such review meeting was held in June 2006.

Nigeria's Food Security situation in the Eyes of the World

Few international agencies conduct periodic review of the global food security situation on country basis. Two notable ones are the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the United States Development Agencies (USDA). The Economic Research Services (ERS) of the USDA defines hungry people as those who consume less than 2,100 calories a day. In its Food Security Assessment Report 2005, the USDA, using 1992 as the starting period, reported a 7% decline in the number of hungry people from 688 million in 1992-1994 to 639 in 2002 – 2004. The story is however not the same for all regional blocks let alone individual countries. While Asia, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) experienced varying percentage fall in the number of hungry people, Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) experienced deteriorating food security status. The food security projection by this same report indicated a deteriorating picture for the SSA by the year 2015. Every other regional block, except Asia, which was to remain virtually on the level already attained, were projected to have varying levels of improvement in their food security position. This same view was shared by FAO (2006) which reported that the prevalence of hunger will decline but not the number of the hungry.

FAO (2006) reported that between 1990 and 1992, the number of the undernourished in Nigeria was about 11.3 million persons. This figure fell to about 10 million persons in 1995 – 1997. This decline was however not sustained as the number of the undernourished rose to about 12 million between 2001 and 2003. The prevalence of the undernourished followed a similar trend. From about 12% in the 1990 – 1992 periods, the prevalence of the undernourished fell to about 9% in 1995 – 1997 period but rose slightly in the succeeding 2001 – 2003 period.

In terms of progress towards halving the number of the undernourished by the year 2015, many African countries like Angola, Benin, Chad, Malawi and Mozambique, were said to have made varying levels of progress. Ghana was reported to have attained the target. And Nigeria was said to have achieved only marginal reduction in the number of undernourished. The prevalence of the hungry was, however, said to have declined appreciably in that projection.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Nigeria's effort towards achieving the Rome Declaration on World Food Security was measured using internationally recognized yardsticks of Aggregate Measure of Support (AMS) and Nutritional target.

The AMS to agriculture is an index that measures the monetary value of government support to the sector (USAD, 2001). For Nigeria, the federal government budgetary estimates from 1992 to 2005 were used. They were derived by summing the recurrent and capital budgetary estimates for the respective years. The figures were expressed as a percentage of their respective year federal government total budgetary estimates. This result was used as a proxy index for federal government commitment to agriculture.

The nutritional target approach seeks to determine the calorie intake/capita/day in comparison to the minimum calorie requirement specified by the FAO for an individual to live a healthy and productive life. This minimum was 2,100 cal/capita/day for refugees and about 2,700cal/capita/day for people who work for their livelihood. There is a food gap/deficit if the nutritional target exceeds the estimated level of calorie intake/capita/day. In the same way, there is a surplus if the estimated calorie intake/capita/day is greater than the minimum specified. It is in this sense that contribution would have been made towards achieving WFS goal.

The items of food and volume of output of the respective items of food used in this analysis were obtained from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Statistical Bulletin (2005). The crops used were maize, millet, sorghum, rice, wheat, acha, beans and soya for grains; cassava, potato, yams, cocoyam, and plantain for roots and tubers; and groundnut oil and palm oil for vegetable oil. These crops were about all the staple food crops in Nigeria. The annual output of the respective crops were converted into calorie equivalent using 3.5calorie per gram for grain crops, 1calorie per gram for root and tuber crops and 8 calorie per gram for vegetable oil following USDA (2005). The population figures were extrapolated from the 1991 census figure using 2.8% growth rate (CBN, 2004).

There was, however, a point of departure of this paper from some earlier studies. Food security estimates of most international agencies like the USDA and FAO consider supplies from domestic production, food aid and

commercial imports. Hence a country can be food secure if by combining supplies from one or more sources. The key question, of course, was if every nation were to be a net importer of food where will the “net” come from? It was for this reason that this paper was of the strong view that the commitment elicited from the 186 countries that participated at the WFS was not to repackage themselves to attract food aid or concessionary terms in food import but to, in the words of Jacques Diouf, the then Director General of FAO, “dispel any complacency that may be engendered by the abundance of the world food supplies” and to put in place machinery-policies, programmes, projects and institutions that will ensure a sustainable increase in food supplies per capita from domestic sources. It is therefore to the extent that a country succeeds in attaining food security from internal sources and has extra to send to the “world food pool” or is able to maintain food reserve from domestic sources alone that it can be said to be contributing meaningfully towards the WFS goal. It was for this reason that this paper assessed Nigeria’s commitment to the Rome declaration using strictly food supplies from domestic sources.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Nigeria’s Agricultural Policies and the Rome Declaration

Nigeria’s agricultural policy evolution has been remarkable since the first national development Plan 1962 – 1968. As against what happened in the early years after independence when national plans were truly speaking regional plans fused into one unwholesome plan, agricultural policy have become centralized since, especially, 1988. Agricultural plans of the states are now extension of that of the federal government (Ayoola, 2001). This, by extension, pre-prepared the federal government to carry all the states along with it in the drive towards achieving the goal of the WFS. By this, the commitment of the federal government to the WFS Action plan invariably becomes binding on all the states of federation.

Fertilizer is a key input in agricultural production. Nigeria’s fertilizer policy has been changing over the years in an attempt to find answers to the problems of availability, leakage and arbitrage of the product. Before 1996, the FGN had monopoly in importing the product. At that time, subsidy was up to 75% of the price. In an attempt to privatize the supply of this input, the federal government initiated the liberalization process on 1997 but failed to follow through to the logical conclusion due to the poor response of the private sector to stimuli to invest in agriculture through procurement and distribution of fertilizer. This led to a fall in fertilizer usage of up to 50% in the post- 1996 as compared to pre – 1996 period (Nagy-2002). Some of the reasons adduced for the fall in fertilizer consumption were high prices, low quality and non-availability of the product. In addition, the Federal Government owned fertilizer producing company, National Fertilizer Company of Nigeria (NAFCON), which started operation in 1988 discontinued production in 1999, eleven years after commencing production.

The Federal government of Nigeria has in place adequate policies and programmes for poverty alleviation. Examples of these are the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and the National Opportunity Actualization Agency (NOAA). NAPEP, under its Farmers Empowerment programme disbursed a total of N240 million to 7,200 farm families to enable them expand their activities and improve productivity. These farmers were also introduced to new and improved farming techniques (CBN, 2004). In addition to the above, there are the Presidential initiatives on cassava, rice, Vegetable oil, sugar, cereals, tree crops and livestock.

The issue of gender equality and women empowerment has taken a central stage in the nations development efforts since the Beijing Convention of 1996. There is now the ministry of Women Affairs at the Federal and State levels. The present dispensation of President Umar Yar dua has earmarked 30% of his political appointments for women.

Concerning food security, such strategy as the maintenance of zero tariff regimes on imported agricultural machinery, liberalization of agricultural loan terms to enable smallholder farmers obtain more substantial amount of loan without tangible collateral have been put in place. Furthermore, the Nigerian Agricultural Cooperative and Rural Development Bank (NACRDB) has been strengthened to enable it reach the farmers more effectively. There were policies on improving the quality of the farm environment in order to increase crop yield. In addition, there were provision for taking advantage of the various concessionary arrangements provided by the World Trade Organization (WTO) and other bilateral and multilateral relationship with other countries and international bodies (NEEDS, 2004). Today, Nigeria has an agreement with China in the export of cassava and its derivatives. This was expected to boost output, increase farmers’ income and therefore their access to other means of sustenance. These measures tie up with the objectives and action plan the WFS.

Aggregate Measure of Nigeria's Support to Agriculture Since 1992

Table 1 shows the FGN total budget estimates for the period 1992 - 2005. In columns 2 and 3 respectively are the FGN total budget estimates for agriculture. In columns 4 and 5 are indexes of FGN budget estimates for agriculture with 1997 as the base year and percent of FGN budgetary for agriculture to FGN total budgetary estimates.

Table 1 shows that FGN budget for agriculture have been on the upward trend in absolute terms except in especially 2000 and 2003 when the amount fell. The percentage share of agriculture in FGN total budget estimate has been negligible. It ranged from 1.30% to 6.38% except in 1999 when the percentage share was 10.68%. The absolute figures also indicate a wide variation with a coefficient of variation of 109.88%. Thus with regard to AMS, Nigerians commitment may be said to be substantial in absolute terms but not as a percentage of FGN total budget. Care should however be exercised in attaching much importance to monetary figure for even though some quantum of money is a essential for effective project implementation, beyond that, its importance may assume a dip in trend, especially where inefficiency and misappropriation are not uncommon. Column 7 reveals that 100% of budgeted amount was not appropriated in any year. It was in only years 2000 (73.61%) and 2003 (66.06%) that appropriation to the sector exceeded 50% of amount budgeted. This under appropriation coupled with the emerging trend of under spending in ministries with selfish ulterior motives will certainly make unsustainable any gain towards food security that unsustainable.

Table 1. Federal Government budget estimates 1992 - 2005

Year	FGN total budget (N'million)	FGN budget estimate for agriculture (N'mn)	Appropriation by National Assembly (N'mn.	Index of FGN total budget estimate for agriculture (1997 = 100)	% of total budget estimate for agriculture to FGN total budget	% Budget performance column (4/3)×100.
1992	52035.90	924.50		11.66	1.78	NA
1993	112100.50	2835.30		35.76	2.53	NA
1994	110201.00	3719.10		46.90	3.37	NA
1995	153495.60	6927.70		87.37	4.51	NA
1996	189000.00	5574.00		70.29	2.95	NA
1997	276723.20	7929.60		100.00	2.87	NA
1998	367917.10	11840.40		149.32	3.22	NA
1999	358103.50	38259.80	5000.00	482.49	10.68	13.07
2000	664735.30	10596.40	7800.00	133.63	1.59	73.61
2001	1018025.60	64943.90	10000.00	819.01	6.38	15.40
2002	1188734.60	44803.80	12600.00	565.02	3.77	28.12
2003	1225956.60	16045.20	10600.00	202.35	1.31	66.06
2004	1302231.50	59773.40	10550.00	753.80	4.59	17.65
2005	1799938.20	90798.20	9600.00	1145.05	5.04	10.57

Source: CBN (2005) Statistical Bulletin *Federal Ministry of Agriculture

Table 2 shows the total calorie supplied from the selected crops for the period under review. The percentage column reveals that calorie supply/capita /day as a percentage of the minimum target from domestic sources increases over the years from 80.62% in 1990 to 102.53% in 2000 and thereafter dropped to 89.78%. It, however, took an upward turn in 2002 and has continued to be so up to the end of 2005 when it was 97.59%.

If, however, a nutritional target of 2700 cal/capita/day (which Nigeria was said to have attained) was used, the calorie supply/capita/day ranged from 48.77% in 1990 to 62.03% in 2000. The two levels of nutritional target therefore indicate that there has always been a food deficit problem in Nigeria. The methodology adopted in the

study report of the USDA (2005) which has it that Nigeria has zero nutritional target in 2005 failed to identify this gap.

Nigeria has hardly been able to feed herself adequately from domestic food sources only. To say, therefore, that Nigeria has surpassed 2,700 cal/capita/day (USDA, 2005) goes to indicate the enormity of food import that Nigeria was into.

Table 3 shows the estimated number and percentage (prevalence) of the population that was undernourished if the refugee cal intake/capita/day was used. About 19.38% of the population (16.81 million persons) could be said to be malnourished in 1990. By 1996, the year of the WFS, the prevalence of undernourishment was 4.61% (4.72 million persons). This was a remarkable fall in both the incidence and number of the malnourished.

Table 2. Calorie supply from major staple food crops 1990 – 2005

Year	Population (million)	Total Produced(millions)	cal. ay SS at 2100 min.reqt	% cal/capita/day of 2100cal. Minimum	Cal./capita/d ay SS at 2700 min.reqt	% cal/capita/ day of 2700cal. Min.reqt.
1990	86710000	112518000000.00	1692.94	80.62	1316.73	48.77
1991	89137880	125937000000.00	1843.23	87.77	1433.62	53.1
1992	91633740.64	136497000000.00	1943.37	92.54	1511.51	55.98
1993	94199485.38	140799000000.00	1950.02	92.86	1516.68	56.17
1994	96837070.97	144505000000.00	1946.83	92.71	1514.2	56.08
1995	99548508.96	152218000000.00	1994.89	94.99	1551.58	57.47
1996	102335867.2	157132000000.00	2003.2	95.39	1558.05	57.71
1997	105201271.5	161990000000.00	2008.88	95.66	1562.47	57.87
1998	108146907.1	167790000000.00	2024.14	96.39	1574.33	58.31
1999	111175020.5	172375000000.00	2022.81	96.32	1573.3	58.27
2000	114287921.1	188626000000.00	2153.22	102.53	1674.73	62.03
2001	117487982.9	169789000000.00	1885.4	89.78	1466.42	54.31
2002	120777646.4	176184000000.00	1903.13	90.63	1480.21	54.82
2003	124159420.5	188985000000.00	1985.8	94.56	1544.51	57.2
2004	127635884.2	197877000000.00	2022.6	96.31	1573.13	58.26
2005	131209689	206119000000.00	2049.46	97.59	1594.03	59.04

Source: Computed from CBN (2005) Statistical Bulletin

This remarkable achievement got to a peak in 2000 when Nigeria could feed an extra 2.90 million persons. In 2001, however, the number of the malnourished rose to a high of 12 million persons and the incidence was 10.22%. There has been a downward trend since then such that in 2005 the incidence of the undernourished was 2.41% and the number was 3.16 million persons. This number was lower than 5.80 persons (half of the 11.59 million undernourished person's average of 1990, 1991 and 1992) that were expected to be halved by the year 2015.

The Future of Nigeria in Rome Declaration Goal

Countries are not equally endowed with agricultural resources. This fact has implications for domestic food security. For countries not so well endowed it may imply disproportionate resource allocation to agriculture, assuming effective utilization, to attain domestic food security if they must. And for those generously endowed, it imposes the responsibility to look beyond ensuring domestic food security to ensuring regional to global food security. Nigeria belongs to this category of countries. While these countries may need some concession/support from international

agencies like FAO, USDA etc in strategic areas to enhance the achievement of the WFS goal, they on their own need to appreciate their role in the emerging world order and the full implication for effective and efficient resources allocation and utilization. It is for this reason that Nigeria needs to take a second look at areas as follows if it is to sustain the trend observed in this study:

Putting in a place the right policies and shaping up the existing institutions in agriculture and related ministries with a view to reducing superfluous Federal and State offices and maintaining functional offices.
Ensure effective monitoring of sectoral fund appropriation and utilization.

Table 3. Estimated number and incidence of the undernourished

Year	No. of the Undernourished	% of Population of Undernourished
1990	16807847	19.38
1991	10899132	12.23
1993	6834561	7.46
1994	7062896	7.29
1995	4982610	5.01
1996	4717130	4.61
1997	4564487	4.34
1998	3901885	3.61
1999	4086523	3.68
2000	-2896560	-2.53
2001	12006046	10.22
2002	11322796	9.37
2003	6751910	5.44
2004	4704191	3.69
2005	3157628	2.41

Source: Derived from CBN (2005) Statistical Bulletin

iii. Pragmatic effort to forestall the effects or perceived risk of pandemic diseases like HIV/AIDS and malaria etc by way of Policy implementation ability and sustainability of relevant government agencies which are likely to be attenuated due to attrition and loss of human capital in the relevant public sector.

iv. Ensuring the adequacy and functioning of relevant infrastructure to minimize postharvest losses

CONCLUSION

Nigeria may have met the WFS target of reducing by 50% the number of the undernourished purely from domestic food sources and there are potentials for improvement but there remains some level of undernourishment. In spite of the presence of apparently creditable policies and programmes, the budgetary estimates for agriculture were not only a small proportion of the FGN total budget and fluctuated widely but were not fully appropriated. This can undermine government commitment to programmes and projects.

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